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Dirty Tricks, Dirty Hands?

From the start, the Central Intelligence Agency has denied any official connections with the former agents who have been accused of training and arming Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi's terror squads. Enter into this bloody labryinth Douglas M. Schlacter, who last week threw the C.I.A. denials into doubt.

According to authorities, Mr. Schlacter was recruited in the mid-1970's for some dirty work in Libya by one of the former agents, Edwin P. Wilson. Mr. Schlachter last week told Federal prosecutors that he had periodically briefed C.I.A. officials, according to his lawyer, Alvin C. Askew. The officials — identified as Theodore G. Shackley, then the chief deputy to the director of clandestine services, and Thomas G. Clines, at the time the division's director of training — not only endorsed Mr. Schlachter's activities, Mr. Askew said, but at one point told him to attempt to obtain certain Soviet military equipment. Mr. Schlachter, who supervised the training of commandos between 1976 and 1978, was thus led to believe that "he was working for the United States Government," his lawyer said.

Both Mr. Shackley and Mr. Clines, who have retired from the agency, have denied any knowledge of the Libya operations. Mr. Schlachter, who returned to the United States from Africa last month, appeared in Federal court in Washington last week and agreed to plead guilty to violating munitions-export laws.

Caroline Rand Herron
— and Michael Wright

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